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NEWSLETTER



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FACT OR LEGEND???

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EDITORIAL

La décennie pour les femmes prendra fin
à la Conférence de Nairobi l'été prochain.

Cette décennie était due, en ce sens que malgré les particularités socio-historiques de chaque pays, la situation des femmes de partout témoigne d'une profonde cognation entre leur vécu si différent soit-il. Cette décennie a permis de créer des réseaux internationaux de questionnements et d'actions pour les femmes en lutte.

D'autres acquis sont moins quantifiables. Ainsi, contre certaines croyances théorico-militantes, de plus en plus de femmes admettent l'impossibilité de réduire à un combat unique les luttes des femmes et croient que seule la pluralité peut assurer la cohésion vivante d'une véritable société en devenir.

Cependant malgré une plus grande ouverture d'esprit de plusieurs et certains progrès, notamment au niveau des lois, les gains sont minces. En général, la situation des femmes n'a guère évolué. Les témoignages et les articles de ce numéro du Bulletin sous-entendent presque tous la nécessité, pour les femmes, de rester alertes et de lutter.

Views expressed in this Bulletin are that of the individual authors and not necessarily shared by the Institute.

Dr. Helvi-Sipila is the first woman to hold the title of the First Woman of the World through her position as the Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations from 1972-1980.

FIRST WOMAN OF THE WORLD TALKS ABOUT WOMEN

by: Laïla Dhanani

In 1972, the United Nations General Assembly accepted, rather reluctantly at first, says Dr. Helvi Sipila, the recommendation for having an International Year for Women. The general belief was that "let women have their year. It doesn't cause too much harm. And they will forget it all after a year."

But one International Year for Women led to a Decade for Women, and after the end of the decade conference (to take place in Nairobi, Kenya, in July 1985), strategy plans will be projected till as far as the year 2000!

In an interview during her visit to Montreal in October, Dr. Sipila said that women actually hold key positions in the world affairs, and the development of the world will never succeed unless we remember this.

Although women have made much progress during the last few years, this Finnish woman who is a lawyer by profession, finds it is not enough.

In no countries do women exercise their political rights to the extent that their population warrants. They are simply not represented in the decision-making bodies, said this one-time candidate for President of Finland. In many countries women are still missing the legal capacity to act as human beings - as persons. They cannot receive credit without their husband's consent, they cannot own property and very often, they cannot even decide on matters relating to their children without their husband's agreement.

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EVOLUTION-INVOLUTION

Que de distance parcourue par la droite depuis les années 30!

Relisons Daudet. Son texte nous aide à mieux cerner cette évolution(? ? ?).

La Femme et l'amour

Paris, ed. Ernest Flammarion, 1930

texte choisi par : Mair Verthuy

D'un hybride possible - L'amour ramène la femme à son essence.

La formation possible d'un hybride, participant moralement et intellectuellement de la femme, est la grande préoccupation de ceux qui étudient la société contemporaine, en dehors de toute idée préconçue, et cherchent à lui trouver un sens. Sapée, minée de tous les côtés, la famille serait encore gravement atteinte dans sa pièce maîtresse, qui est l'épouse et la mère, si un tel être ambigu s'installait au foyer, faussant les perspectives d'une longue tradition civilisée. Ce serait là une forme inédite de révolution, particulièrement funeste, parce que par le dedans et aux ravages internes.

A première vue, c'est vers cet hybride que convergent les forces aveugles telles que la grande industrie, la mécanique, la chimie et aussi les utopies politiques telles que l'égalité, le progrès, etc. Les nécessités de la vie matérielle ont, depuis quelques années, levé la barrière entre les métiers et professions qui paraissaient les uns, réservés aux hommes, les autres réservés aux femmes. Vaste est la zone où, les labeurs se confondant, les allures tendent à se confondre, par la masculinisation de la femme. Les liens dans lesquels, en France et ailleurs, le code civil tenait la femme captive lui ont fait croire à une émancipation par le virilisme et l'accès aux fonctions jusqu'alors interdites. Elle ne s'est pas aperçue que, ce faisant, elle se dépouillait volontairement de sa plus grande puissance, qui est le charme et le muet appel à la protection du mâle. Voici qu'apparaissent la femme douanière, la femme policière, la femme soldat, la femme garde-chiourme, rivalisant de brutalité avec l'homme dans chacun de

Women in the developed countries can offer a unique kind of help to women in the underdeveloped countries. Women here know what it is like to be a woman and a mother, she said. And we should not forget our sisters in the third world who have to fight hunger, poverty and diseases - all combined to create enormous difficulties. We have to come together to create not just equality between men and women but between women and women around the world also, she said.

To a very familiar complaint from women that this is a world created by men and we do not accept it, Dr. Sipila said that we do in fact accept it for as long as we do not do anything to change the situation.

We do not like arms race, we do not like power games, we do not like spendings on armament instead of on development - well, if we do not like it why don't we get involved? Why don't we try to change the situation? Dr. Sipila questions.

Dr. Sipila would like to see women get involved in national decision-making bodies and exercise their influence on national and international levels.

Why can't a young girl say that her great-grandmother was a president of a company, her grandmother was a senator and her mother is the President of her country!

Schools and universities can play a crucial role in preparing young people for a better future. Dr. Sipila gave a few examples of the kind of courses that could be included as part of the curriculum.

- . How to participate in community affairs
- . How to divide labour in a family (between men and women)
- . How to use and make use of your money (this is an area responsible for many family quarrels Dr. Sipila found when she worked as a lawyer on cases dealing with families.)
- . Legal rights and responsibilities of parents vis-a-vis the children
- . How to behave as a human being.

contd...

We have to remember, Dr. Sipilä says that to have rights is one thing. But these have to be implemented and this means responsibility - responsibilities to be shared by men and women: by men in the homes and by women in society. If this happens then the wonderful education that universities are giving to women will not be in vain!

Finally, a message for young women at universities, the 70-year-old First Woman of the World and also the President of the Finnish Association for the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, says; Aim for the highest goals and try your best to achieve them. But be satisfied, she adds, with whatever your best efforts result in. Most of all, have confidence in yourself. Remember, you are a woman and you count!

Progress for Women Means Progress for the World

This is the emblem of the International Women's Year (1975) and the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-1985). It has been donated to the UK by the highly respected industrial designer Henry Dreyfuss Associates. It is a legally protected trade mark.

When purchasing products bearing this emblem you assist the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women to support low-income women in the developing countries in their efforts to improve the social and economic conditions of themselves and their families.

Use the emblem proudly



OFFICIAL SYMBOL
OF THE UN DECADE
FOR WOMEN

Henri Sipilä
Hen. Sipilä

The Finnish Association for the
Voluntary Fund for the United Nations
Decade for Women

Mathematical Sign
for Equality

Dove of Peace
and Progress

Biological Symbol for
Woman and Life



THE OBJECTIVES OF WOMEN'S STUDIES

UNESCO and the UNITED NATIONS have defined the objectives of Women's Studies in the following manner.

1. To raise fundamental questions about women in society using a scientific and academic approach;
2. To stimulate interest in and support of research topics relevant to women and social change;
3. To investigate our socio-political and cultural backgrounds and their effect on the status of women;
4. To engage in a continuous evaluation of research into the history, conditions and changing needs of women;
5. To promote the understanding of the historical and contemporary role of women in society;
6. To encourage a new and full recognition of the contribution of women to human achievement;
7. To ensure that women and issues of gender are studied in a non-discriminatory manner as part of the curriculum either in separate distinguishable Women's Studies courses or in courses so transformed as to give women's perspective its rightful place;
8. To strengthen and widen women's rights by providing the conditions which allow women to exercise those rights;
9. To ensure the equality of all individuals without distinction of race, sex, age, language or religion and thus transform society.

LES OBJECTIFS DES ETUDES SUR LA FEMME

ainsi que définis par l'UNESCO & les NATIONS UNIES

Les objectifs visés par ces programmes d'enseignement et de recherche portant sur les études féminines peuvent se résumer de la manière suivante:

1. Soulever certaines questions fondamentales sur la place de la femme dans la société, en les abordant de façon scientifique et académique;
2. Susciter l'intérêt et chercher des soutiens pour la recherche entreprise au bénéfice des femmes et dans le sens d'une évolution sociale;
3. Procéder à une enquête sur les acquis sociopolitiques et culturels et sur leurs conséquences sur le statut de la femme;
4. Entreprendre une évaluation exhaustive de la recherche portant sur les femmes, leur histoire, leurs conditions et l'évolution de leurs besoins;
5. Provoquer une prise de conscience du rôle historique et contemporain de la femme dans la société;
6. Promouvoir la reconnaissance pleine et entière de la contribution des femmes aux réalisations humaines;
7. S'assurer que les femmes et les questions qui les concernent sont étudiées d'une manière non discriminatoire dans le cadre de programmes universitaires - qu'elles constituent une discipline autonome spécifiquement axée sur les études féminines ou qu'elles s'intègrent dans d'autres disciplines - en les modifiant de manière à allouer au point de vue féminin la place qui lui est due;
8. Etendre et renforcer les droits des femmes en créant les conditions qui leur permettent d'exercer ces droits;
9. Garantir l'égalité de tous les individus, sans distinction de race, de sexe, d'âge, de langue ou de religion et transformer ainsi la société.

CHINESE VISIT THE INSTITUTE

by : Sheila McDonough

A delegation of women from China visited The Simone de Beauvoir Institute on November 13, 1984.

They talked with us for at least two hours. One of them is editing a journal for women in China. They seemed very much interested in trying to get a sense of what we understand by feminism.

Since China is now opening more on the West, they seemed interested in gathering information about our thoughts and the practices so that they might sort out for themselves in the lights of their priorities and concerns what might or might not be useful for them.

They had visited at a YMCA a group of pregnant teenagers. They were puzzled by this and they wanted to know why our society permit such occurrences. It was not easy for us to explain our practices in this respect.

Zhu Yiyun, deputy-editor-in-chief of
Women of China
so Deng Shi Kou, Beijing, China.

朱一云, 英文版中国妇女杂志社社长

Yan Wang, member of the editorial board of
Lioner of China

so Deng Shi Kou, Beijing, China

严婉宜, 编委, 英文版《中国妇女》杂志社

Wang Guannin, photographer of Women of China

汪国民 摄影记者

Xiang Pan, ~~translation~~ translator of Women
of China

项盼, 翻译

16 13 Novembre 1984

PORNOGRAPHY IS A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE WHICH CONCERNS BOTH MEN & WOMEN

By: B.J. Bell

From its very inception "The Councils of Women" around the world have worked to improve social conditions, especially as they apply to women and children. Thus, the Montreal Council was true to its mandate when it applied to the Secretary of State last spring for a grant to write an information booklet on pornography and to hold a seminar for the Montreal Community. This seminar was held on September 23 in collaboration with "The Women's Y" on Dorchester Blvd. The seminar made an impact on those who attended and the booklet continues to stimulate, teach and guide, we hope.

Council members believe that while tolerance is a positive quality, when human rights are being systematically violated, remaining silent becomes an act of irresponsibility. How can we remain silent when women are tortured and then "snuffed out"? How can we remain silent when there are 20,000 peep-show/bookstores in North America - four times the number of McDonald restaurants? How can we remain silent when a social worker in a Quebec school is asked by a student, "Do I have to beat my girlfriend so she'll have an orgasm?" How can we remain silent when, after killing nine children, Clifford Olsen's apartment is found to have a large collection of "kiddie porn" and other violent magazines?

No one ever asks why blacks or jews strongly object to hate-filled images of themselves created by those who want to humiliate, destroy or dominate them. Why, then, are women still being asked why we object to pornography? Pornography tells lies about people. It tells the reader or viewer that people (women, men and children) are mindless objects to be used by anyone in power. It says that women enjoy rape and pain and that violence is normal and acceptable!

Pornography is filled with images of silencing women (gags of all sorts, chain, masks, etc). Many have spoken out, however and "the booklet" gives examples of what has been done and what you can do -- e.g. Advertisements have been removed, the Canadian Radio Television Commission (C.R.T.C) is considering regulations for pay T.V., demonstrations have been organized, many reports have been submitted to the Badgely*Committee, women have boycotted companies or stores which sell degrading material - any action taken is better than no action at all. Any word spoken out is better than silence.

It would not have helped jews in Nazi Germany who complained about bitter anti-semitic propoganda to be told "if you don't like it, don't read it." The greatest danger lay not in jews reading or seeing anti-semitic literature, but in non-jews reading it and increasing their anti-semitic behaviour. Today pornography is to women what anti-semitic propoganda is to jews. Must we have as many victims before we begin to control it?

Canada needs better laws, with the political will to apply them. Good laws are not enough. Educating men, women and young people is the ultimate long-term solution to the pornography problem.

Thus our booklet! Help us celebrate the end of Women's Decade by becoming informed and involved.

*Badgely Commission was set up to study pornography and prostitution.

Ms. B.J. Bell is the Education Chairperson of the Montreal Council of Women. She was also a member of the Committee that applied for the grant and later wrote the information booklet on pornography.

This booklet can be obtained for \$1.00 at:

Montreal Council of Women
1195 Sherbrooke St. W.
Montreal, H3C 3P3

TEMOIGNAGE

par: Françoise Auclair

Au tout début, être engagée comme secrétaire à l'Institut ne fut qu'une chose banale, l'objectif étant de trouver un emploi. Après une année, je réalise que ce n'est pas seulement un emploi mais aussi une source d'enrichissement personnel et la compréhension de ma révolte intérieure.

Tout d'abord, - à toute seigneuresse tout honneur -, je me devais de connaître un peu mieux la personne dont l'Institut porte le nom, Simone de Beauvoir. Grâce au centre de documentation à notre disposition j'ai relu "Les mémoires d'une jeune fille rangée". A quelques années d'intervalles!!! nous nous sommes assises sur les mêmes chaises d'école (à l'époque c'était encore des chaises installées autour d'immenses tables ovales) au Cours Désir, rue Jacob, et avons eu le même professeur d'Anglais, Mlle Dubois dont la description faite par Simone de Beauvoir a fait ressurgir des souvenirs que je croyais oubliés.

Je me souviens qu'à l'époque le nom de Simone de Beauvoir était banni au Cours Désir, nous le savions par les grandes de terminales qui avaient l'interdiction de lire ses livres, du moins de les apporter au Cours Désir. L'explication donnée étant que ses mémoires, relatives au Cours Désir, étaient outrageuses. Aujourd'hui j'en comprends réellement le sens: la liberté, tant religieuse que morale, que prônait Simone de Beauvoir, et qu'elle défend encore, ainsi que le rôle de la femme à part entière ne pouvaient qu'affoler ces "nonettes". La contamination morale eut été un désastre pour la renommée de l'école. Cet esprit de révolte, je l'ai connu aussi, ce qui m'a valu à l'époque d'être dispensée de la messe du jeudi matin et de faire de l'étude à la place. Mais ce n'était que de façon embryonnaire. Par l'éducation reçue "d'une jeune fille rangée", et elle fut bonne, car comme tant d'autres jeunes filles je fus séduite par le miroir aux alouettes: études, mariage, enfants, popotte.... oubli de soi-même et puis presque plus rien, jusqu'à cette heureuse rencontre avec les étudiantes et les professeurs en Etudes de la Femme.

Pourquoi heureuse? Parce qu'elles ont su, par leur enthousiasme apporté dans leurs études, me redonner confiance et surtout revaloriser mon travail en le rendant plus humain, en réveillant ma curiosité et mon désir d'en apprendre davantage sur la condition de la femme: - la naissance du féminisme et son évolution, entre autre le travail de recherche que j'ai dactylographié sur C. Marshall, pour Jo Vellacott; - leur travaux de recherche sur la publicité sexiste; - sur leurs travaux traitant de la pornographie; - leur recherche sur la femme émigrante au Canada: interviewée par l'une d'elles, ses questions pertinentes m'ont sensibilisée sur le manque de pouvoir décisionnel, économique des femmes dans la société actuelle.

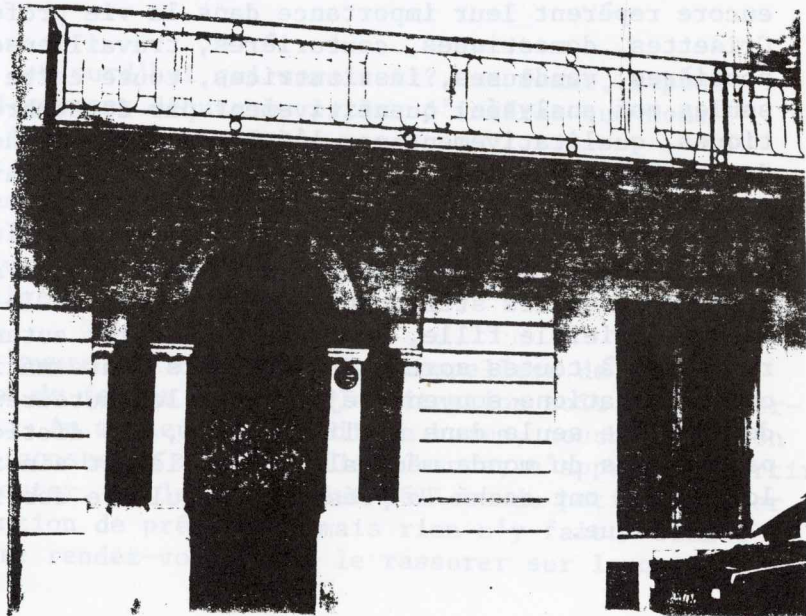
Leur succès dans leurs travaux je le partage avec elles, mais je partage aussi le plaisir des professeurs lorsqu'elles ont un bon groupe participant. Il ne faut pas oublier le rôle très important de la conseillère pour étudiant/e/s que nous regrettons, et qui par ses conseils judicieux, sa bonne humeur, et son équilibre nous permettait de réévaluer avec justesse nos propres valeurs et nos rapports avec autrui: tant sur le plan travail que sur le plan personnel.

Par un travail en profondeur et continu il me semble que l'Institut a un rôle déterminant à jouer: sur le plan universitaire par la formation de la future génération des femmes, et sur le plan support social auprès des autres femmes de différents groupes sociaux.

Cours A. Désir
39, rue Jacob
Paris 6ème

Maintenant en 1984:

Centre Régional de
Documentation Pédago-
gique.



Arlette Farge et Christiane Klapisch-Zuber

Madame ou Mademoiselle ?

Itinéraires de la solitude féminine XVIII^e-XX^e siècle

Paris, Montalba, 1984.

par: Lucie Lequin

Fruit d'un travail d'équipe, ce livre dossier est pluriel. Il illustre des situations multiples et contradictoires; il évoque des figures diverses. Pourtant, une même ligne méthodique le traverse: le souci de sortir de l'opacité des classifications traditionnelles, les femmes seules.

La solitude des femmes, sauf celle des femmes exceptionnelles, reste dans un angle mort de l'histoire. Ce n'est qu'en situation conflictuelle, par exemple les guerres, que les femmes seules deviennent une unité visible et surtout utile. La crise terminée, on les retourne dans l'ombre.

Dans la première partie, les différents textes démontrent la présence démographique des femmes seules, leur relation au droit ou encore repèrent leur importance dans la vie professionnelle et sociale. Grisettes, domestiques, couturières, travailleuses à domicile, ouvrières, postières, vendeuses, institutrices, toute cette cohorte de femmes seules est analysée, quantitativement par de nombreuses évidences statistiques, qualitativement par l'étude de correspondances, de rapports, de brochures sur les protocoles d'emploi, de travail et plus émouvants par des solitudes en récit.

La deuxième partie analyse le monde abondant et multiforme des images et des stéréotypes créés autour de la femme seule. Célibataire, vieille fille, veuve, femme seule: autant d'expressions qui renvoient à toutes sortes de jugements fantasmatiques. Pour décanter ces connotations souvent péjoratives les auteures y étudient la figure de la femme seule dans la littérature, les dictionnaires et dans les perceptions du monde médical. Elles lèvent ainsi les masques qui, trop longtemps, ont caché la présence singulière des femmes seules dans la vie publique.

Toutes les études rassemblées dans ce livre tentent de définir les différentes solitudes - transitoire, permanente, choisie, imposée. Elles mettent également en lumière un étonnant paradoxe: le mariage que de nombreux discours présentent comme la fin ultime des femmes semble un destin plus masculin que féminin. Les femmes seules sont toujours beaucoup plus nombreuses que les hommes seuls. Le mariage serait-il le but ultime des hommes?

Cet ouvrage comble avec bonheur une des lacunes de la réalité historique et éclaire un présent où la solitude est parfois revendiquée comme mode de vie.

NOTES DE LECTURE

Nicole AVRIL, JEANNE
Paris, ed. Flammarion, 1984, 258 pp.

par: Mair Verthuy

"Don Juan aujourd'hui qui serait-il? Une femme, répond Nicole Avril". Volià comment débute la prière d'insérer que nous trouvons sur la belle jaquette rouge de ce roman.

Non seulement femme, mais chirurgienne (Nicole Avril préfère la version masculine du mot: chirurgien -- et pour cause) spécialisée dans le cardiaque, toujours proche donc de la mort qu'elle essaye par son travail de vaincre tous les jours.

Le livre s'ouvre sur une scène qui rappellera de mauvais souvenirs à bon nombre de femmes bien que la situation soit ici renversée en notre "faveur". Au milieu de la nuit un homme, couché dans son lit, se réveille pour constater que sa belle, Jeanne, s'apprête à partir. Pour l'encourager à rester, il lui vante les délices du petit déjeuner qu'il avait eu l'intention de préparer, mais rien n'y fait. Jeanne part sans fixer d'autre rendez-vous, sans le rassurer sur la qualité de leur rencontre.

Cette scène donne le ton du roman. Jeanne, que nous verrons pour ainsi dire pas au travail, passera d'un homme à l'autre, toujours inassouvie, toujours à la recherche d'un éternel masculin qui fuit toujours ses étreintes. Sur son chemin s'empilent vies et coeurs brisés. A la fin elle trouvera la mort grâce au geste inconscient d'une de ses victimes, Viva, jeune fille "vierge et veuve".

Si le Don Juan que l'auteure a voulu moderniser n'est que le séducteur sans scrupules, il est évident que la chirurgienne répond à ce critère bien que les conséquences de son dévergondage ne soient pas nécessairement aussi néfastes pour les hommes que ne l'étaient pour les femmes celles du comportement de son modèle. Si Don Juan est aussi le "libertin" dans le sens fort du mot, celui qui risqua non seulement sa vie mais l'éternité pour affirmer sa liberté, cette Dona Juana n'en est que la pâle imitation puisqu'elle ne "risque" rien du tout.

Le livre prétend nous offrir une image de la femme contemporaine, celle qui, "libérée", réussit dans le monde, mène sa barque comme elle l'entend. Et qu'entend-elle? Imiter effectivement le modèle masculin (ce pour quoi elle sera d'ailleurs punie à la fin, puisqu'elle meurt).

Livre dangereux alors et cela pour plusieurs raisons. D'une part, il suppose que le seul modèle qui puisse s'offrir aux femmes désireuses d'affirmer leur autonomie soit celui des - hommes - et quels hommes! D'autre part, il apprend aux femmes que l'autonomie mène à la mort. Seule Viva vierge vit! Et de surcroît, il confirme les pires fantasmes masculins au sujet des appétits sexuels des femmes. Il n'est pas étonnant qu'il se vende bien puisqu'il véhicule, sous cette intrigue rondement menée, tous les poncifs de la société patriarcale.

Ce qui est plus grave, c'est qu'il le fasse sous le couvert de la libération des femmes. Nous approchons de la fin officielle de la "Décennie des femmes". De tels romans nous font comprendre que le féminisme est menacé de partout et que nous devons nous préserver avec vigilance de tous les assauts, d'où qu'ils viennent, des hommes ou des femmes.

"AN ANATOMY OF EMOTIONS, HONEST AND PROVOCATIVE"

BETWEEN WOMEN. Edited by Carol Ascher, Louise De Salvo, Sara Ruddick.
Beacon Press. Cloth \$29.95, 11.95 pb., 469pp.

THE ANATOMY OF FREEDOM. By Robin Morgan. Doubleday Anchor.
\$8.95 pb., 365pp.

by: Pat Morley

Most studies of the biographer's art are impersonal and abstract. The writer's personal involvement, through attitude and perception, may be stressed in theory but is rarely elaborated in fact. To say that Between Women is subjective and emotional is not to disparage a fascinating anthology which also offers highly intelligent analyses of the biographical process.

Subtitled Biographers, Novelists, Critics, Teachers and Artists Write About Their Work on Women, the collection of twenty-five essays provides startlingly honest and moving portraits of talented women in love with their work. All acknowledge emotional involvement with the object of their study; one compares the process to transference in psychoanalysis. Most of the writers found that this type of study had been a tremendous learning experience, not simply into the facts of the life in question but into the very nature of human experience and understanding.

A working biographer or critic will be heartened to find that a major prerequisite is staying power; that ambivalent feelings about one's subject are common; and that one may move from romantic idealization, through a knowledge of weakness and worse, into compassionate understanding. The reader will enjoy a look behind the scenes into the processes through which books get written. Photographs of the writers and the women whose lives they studied form part of the attractive format of Between Women.

Radical feminist Robin Morgan examines philosophical and social concepts of freedom with fairness and balance. Morgan attempts an analysis, both poetic and logical, of an idea as yet unborn: "Freedom has been discussed, syllogized, defined, fought over and died for over millenia, yet it still hasn't been coaxed into existence." Her analogy for feminism and human freedom is quantum physics which has altered our perception of reality in the physical universe. Morgan's Anatomy is a utopian vision of women and society, at once accusation, plea, and celebration.

ces métiers de force, et y contractant la grossièreté naturelle du mâle. On voit poindre l'âge des casernes de femmes s'exerçant aux chars d'assaut, aux gaz asphyxiants, aux avions de bombardement, pataugeant dans l'huile et l'essence et contribuant, elles, les porteuses de vie, les propagatrices de la race, les premières éducatrices de l'enfant, à la dévastation et à l'extermination générales. Ce ne serait pas d'ailleurs une nouveauté, puisque, dans le monde antique, les femmes combattaient souvent auprès des hommes et avec une férocité constatée par tous les historiens. Tous les états de confusion sexuelle, quel que soit le mode de cette confusion, sont des états de barbarie et qui déchainent des calamités de toutes couleurs.

Heureusement que l'amour est là pour ramener la femme à son essence et refaire cette architecture sociale et familiale différenciée, avec ses hiérarchies et privilèges, qui a permis à l'humanité en général, à celle d'occident en particulier, de cheminer cahin caha à travers les âges. C'est un grand sujet, et qui n'a pas encore été traité par un dramaturge ni par un romancier d'envergure, que cette restauration de l'ordre naturel par l'amour, en qui les romantiques ne voulaient voir qu'un délicieux fléau. Nous avons vu au cours de cette rapide étude, que l'essence de la femme est d'aimer et de se dévouer à ce qu'elle aime, de vouloir le prolongement de ce qu'elle aime, l'éternité, s'il est possible, de ce qu'elle aime, la suppression de la douleur et de la mort chez ce qu'elle aime. Elle est l'aspiration sans limites, aux bras tendus vers le ciel et son semblable, vers la lumière, vers les étoiles, vers la souffrance, prête à donner tout et elle-même par amour. De quelque costume ou fonction qu'on la revête, à quelque hybridité que les circonstances la contraignent ou qu'elle se contraigne, son élémentaire, sa qualité, son propre, son ambiance demeureront l'extase amoureuse, cette extase qui fait tomber la virilisation factice de la femme comme ses vêtements, et la livre, une et pâmée, à son amant, ou, spiritualisée par la foi, à l'Amant divin.

L'amour, à tous les niveaux, pourrait bien ainsi se confondre avec la vie elle-même, avec cette vie dont nous cherchons visiblement la clé, comme on cherchait jadis la pierre philosophale. Comme la vie -- en dépit des mécanistes -- l'amour n'est pas mesurable. Il ne se pèse point. Il échappe à l'estimation comme à la balance. Il échappe même d'une certaine façon à la pensée, attendu qu'il ne relève pas d'elle et qu'il est plus senti que réfléchi,

plus éprouvé que médité. Il est le comble du qualificatif et comme tel, susceptible d'une foule de transmutations, plus surprenantes les unes que les autres. C'est lui qui mène le monde, et heureusement ! Sa quintessence, son élixir suprême a été confié par la Providence et par la nature à ce vase frêle et délicat, corruptible et sublimé qu'est la femme, et elle le transmet avec la vie, en même temps qu'elle comme un identique autrement compris.

Plusieurs de celles qui liront ceci trouveront peut-être que je limite la femme, en ne faisant d'elle que la porteuse de ce vase sacré. Grande est leur erreur. Ce serait la limiter, au contraire, que de la vouer au simple destin de gagner sa vie, ou de dépenser son effort, ou d'augmenter et de dépenser son intelligence. Elle peut faire cela, sans doute. Mais elle peut faire bien plus que cela et elle cerne l'homme de tous les côtés, mère, épouse, soeur et fille, le créant, veillant sur lui, le charmant, le préservant, l'inspirant, le veillant, l'ensevelissant, priant pour lui après sa mort, intercédant pour lui. Nous les laids, les égoïstes, les rudes, les bornés, vivons enveloppés par elles, les belles, les altruistes, les bienfaitantes, les douces, comme le ver dans son concon de soie.

THE WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY

A STUDY CENTER ON WOMEN'S TERMS

From Idea to Reality

The Women's University in Norway was formally founded on August 28, 1983, in Oslo, after three years work. Its home, just recently purchased, is located at Loten, near Hamar, two hours by train north of Oslo.

The idea:

The University is for women

- of all ages
- from all countries
- with varying backgrounds, education and experience

The University's operation is

- inter-disciplinary
- cross-political

The Women's University is based on

- complementing existing learning opportunities
- utilizing knowledge already accumulated and which is accumulating about women's views and experiences
- operation which is independent of traditional dividing lines between theory and practice
- testing its learning and teaching on concrete projects and programs as they relate to production and education
- giving prominence to the significance of women's efforts
- helping to secure influence for women wherever public decisions are made
- upgrading women's culture

The intention is to help women build up their own self-confidence.

For more information on the University and how to become a co-founder or be in the University's circle of friends, please write to:

KVINNEUNIVERSITETET
Postboks 12
Blindern, Oslo 3
Norway

NORDIC WOMEN'S PEACE INITIATIVE CAMP

Stockholm, Sweden, July 1984

by : Jo Vellacott

I spent from July 9-15 at a women's peace camp outside Stockholm, attending on behalf of Voice of Women, Canada, and of Canadian Friends' Service Committee. The Nordic women organized marches to Paris (1981), Moscow and Minsk (1982), and Washington (1983); for 1984 they decided instead to hold a four-week camp. The first two weeks were for women and men, the last two for women only, the third being on the theme of "Bridge-building between east and west" and the last on "Women's Peace Work".

Up to ten women from eastern bloc countries and ten from North America were invited to the bridge-building week as guests of the Nordic Women's Peace initiative. Women from the Italian protest camp at Comiso were present by the end of the week, and women attending from Greenham Common included a Hollander as well as the several British women; so there were participants from sixteen countries, a total of nearly eighty women, including many from Scandinavia.

Bridge-building is of several kinds. For me, and I believe for many other participants, real personal bridges were built with other women, whether they came from the east or the west. This happened especially in our small-group meetings, which were a highlight, and I appreciated the time set aside for this.

On the more traditional political level, bridge-building is more difficult, especially with the built-in difference in the way participants are chosen for such a conference, the westerners being in the main self-selected from organizations more or less critical of the policies of their governments, and the participants from the soviet bloc being official representatives. Nevertheless, my understanding was increased; in particular, I have a better sense of how it is that a Bulgarian woman, deeply concerned with peace, can say with conviction, "If my government decides to accept nuclear weapons, it will be for good reasons, and I will support them". At the same time, the statement saddens me, and remains a major stumbling block to a world-wide refusal of women any longer to tolerate any part of the disastrous arms race.

I had an opportunity, unfortunately rather brief, to explain

the Voice of Women's coming conference of women peace negotiations, to be held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, in late May or early June next year. It will draw together a limited number of women with experience and expertise to discuss the special contribution women may make in resolving the issues which constantly impede progress in disarmament talks. Preliminary conferences have already begun across Canada. Considerable interest was shown in this initiative. (For more information, write to Marion Kerans, 6236 Willow Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada B3L 1N9).

On the Thursday, for a change of pace, we combined business with pleasure. A sightseeing tour of Stockholm by boat was followed by a splendid reception and buffet luncheon at the Town Hall, a gesture of official support that was heartwarming. I doubt if the elegant hall we were in has seen many such scenes of dancing and singing. Afterwards we marched, amid generally receptive bystanders, to Kings part where we held an open meeting and peace concert. One feature worthy of note is the extraordinary effectiveness of distinctive "peace kaftans" (some floor length, some shorter) made by the Nordic women for the 1982 and 1983 marches and used since for other public peace events. They are made of coloured cotton and decorated with appliqué work; they are distinctive, attention-getting and photogenic - and they're fun. The different element that women can inject at times into peace demonstrations can say something towards Life, as against the mere avoidance of death.

Some of the more concrete things to emerge from the conference were a request to the United Nations for an extension of the Decade for Women to the year 2,000; a letter to the Washington Post and to Pravda drawing attention to our meeting, supporting the work of the Stockholm Conference, and expressing our determination to continue working together to preserve this planet; and a firm proposal to extend the concept and practice of border meetings such as those now taking place between women in the Balkan countries.

I think it would be a mistake to evaluate the meeting on such concrete results only. I ended the week with a sense that it had been worthwhile, that I now knew more of other women's lives and work, that I had made new friends across political boundaries, and that I saw much more realistically some of the needs and difficulties in international women's work.

XVIth CONGRESS OF F.I.L.L.M.

International Federation of Modern Language and Literature
Federation Internationale des Langues et Litteratures Modernes

by: Pat Morley

Women scholars were well represented at the XVIth Congress of FILLM, held in August 1984, Budapest, Hungary. The association meets triennially. Professors Verthuy and myself, along with Instructor Elsa Scheider, represented the Simone de Beauvoir Institute. There were some 37 Canadians, including a large number of scholars with feminist critical approaches.

Women's Studies as such seemed to be relatively unknown in Hungarian universities since the meaning of the term had to be explained to several local professors. Budapest Radio, however, was interviewing some of the visiting women scholars. Women in Hungary, as in other Socialist countries, are accustomed to working outside the home but usually carry the double burden (house, cooking, children) on top of their outside job.

The professor who has single-handedly introduced the study of Canadian literature to Hungarian universities happens to be a woman. Dr. Anna Jakabfi, an exceptional woman, has pioneered the teaching of Canadian literature in her country. She has been reading it for ten years, and teaching it for five at B8tv8s University, Budapest. Dr. Jakabfi is coming to Canada in January for three months, to study Canadian literature, based in Carleton University. It is exciting to find such enthusiasm for our literature and culture in countries that are relatively remote, and to find women doing the pioneering scholarship in the field.

J.Vellacott article continued from p.23

A great deal of work went into the planning and running of the camp, and I want to express my warmest appreciation to the Nordic Women's Peace Initiative for their vision, for their hard work and for their generous invitation.

I almost passed her
as she slept
a down couch
in a cage

Sometimes she opened her eyes
to stare as I stood

Sometimes she clung eyes closed
to a cage bar

her soft motionlessness
had caught my eye
the soft colours
once used to camouflage.

Johanne Poirier

NATIONAL WOMEN'S STUDIES ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

June 24 - 28, 1984

Steering Our Course Feminist Education in the eighties.

by: Laila Atta

The sixth annual National Women's Studies Association (NWSA) conference was held this year at Douglas College (Rutgers University), the largest women's college in the United States.

The NWSA is a national organization that is committed to furthering the social, political and professional development of Women's Studies and also to maintaining a dialogue among women dedicated to feminist action and change. It is an organization that holds as of its basic tenets the fact that Women's Studies owes its existence to the women's movement and that that movement is linked with global struggles against racism, heterosexism, and ageism.

A group of eight went down from the Simone de Beauvoir; four fellows and four students. Each of us experienced the conference differently but the strongest aspect of it for me was that most of the workshops adhered to the commitment to link feminist theory with feminist practice. There were over 200 workshops over the four day conference that dealt with such issues as literature, spirituality, women of color, lesbian issues, health concerns, feminist theory and many other issues. It was exciting to see feminists making the kinds of connections the women's movement needs to be making in order to move beyond our oppression. Participants tried, for the most part, to avoid treating women's studies as a mere academic discipline. There were concrete suggestions made for alternative lifestyles and a serious dedication to restructuring education at every level.

Many of the workshops I attended dealt specifically with feminist theory, images of women in literature, and student participation in Women's Studies programs since these are the areas that are particular interest to me. The problem with the workshops in general was that their descriptions in the program was far more interesting and 'directioned' than they were in practice. Panelists often got caught up in describing situations in their own universities and lost sight of the broader statements they had set out to make. This has unfortunately been my experience with other conferences as well.

However, this weakness did not dilute the enthusiasm and spirit of the week since there were numerous activities happening which allowed women to make contacts and to further explore their ideas with those interested.

I left the conference with mixed feelings about it. I was thrilled by all the creative and intellectual energy that never seemed to fade. We were all also proud of the fact that two of our professors, Susan Hoecker-Drysdale and Katherine Waters presented a paper together on women's work.

The saddest part of it all was realizing that much of this alternative thinking and strategizing would be lost after the conference because our collective strength disperses when we return to our various cities and work within structures even as we work against them.

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Newsletter

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PLEASE NOTE

We are in the process of compiling a new mailing list.
Please inform us if you wish to have your name on it.

EXPOSITION

AUG. 21-30 AOUT, 1984.

By: Karen den Hertog

Graduate students in Art Education recently held a group exhibition at the Bourget Gallery -- the first of its kind at the University.

The eleven members of the group selected works based on the year's efforts, with most members submitting two or three works. The result was a varied and interesting exhibition, with work ranging through graphic work, installations, sculpture, photocollage and fiber pieces.

The group came together in a studio seminar course. It was during the seminars that the idea of the importance of exhibiting the work of Art Education students came to the fore. The exhibition was a venue for the students to expose the validity of their studio work. The group continued to meet during the spring and summer to prepare for the exhibition. The opening on August 21 was well attended and positive, and encouraging responses were received.

The exhibition can be termed a great success with the hope that future shows of this nature will become an annual event. The group wishes to thank the Department of Art Education, Institut Simone de Beauvoir and Graduate Students Association (G.S.A) for their help and sponsorship. Members of the group are: Angela Grigor, Kathleen Leggett, Erica Justmann, Karen den Hertog, Ilana Kuska, Shushana Caplan, Judy Reid, Ann Brooymans, Louise Robinson, Annie MacDonald and Sylvie Paradis.

The Sixth Berkshire Conference
on the
History of Women

June 1, 2, 3, 1984, Smith College
Northampton, Massachusetts

by: Susan Hoecker-Drysdale

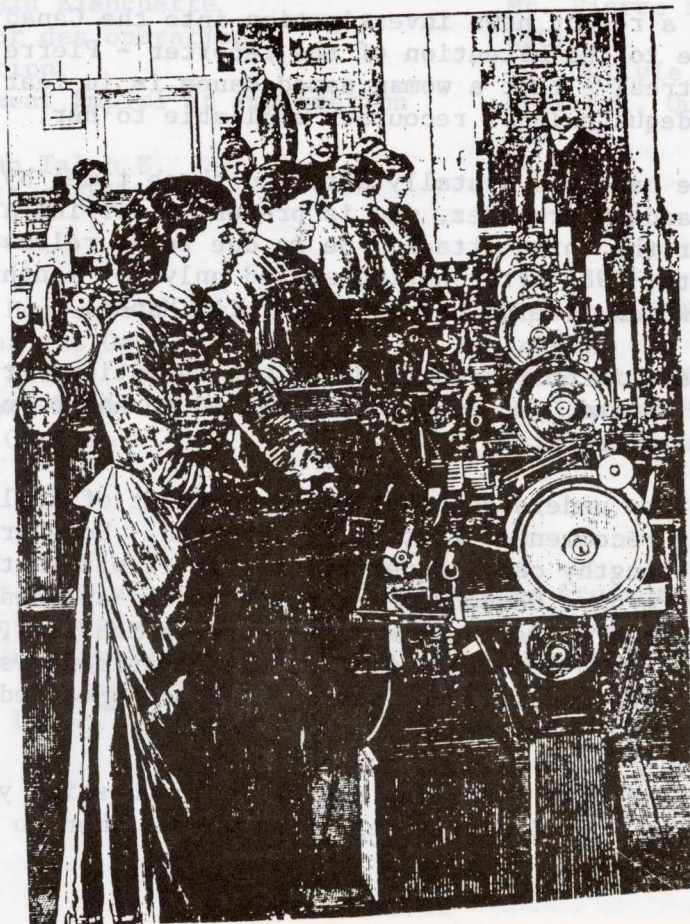
Professors Jo Vellacott and Susan Hoecker-Drysdale attended the Sixth Berkshire Conference on the History of Women at Smith College in June. Dr. Vellacott presented a paper on "Catherine Marshall: Feminist, Pacifist, Socialist" in a session on Women and Nonviolence. In 141 sessions over three days approximately 350 papers were presented and discussed, representing the disciplines of history, sociology, anthropology, literature, religion, political science, economics, psychoanalysis, psychology. Indeed an exciting aspect of "The Berks" is their increasing interdisciplinarity. Social scientists are increasingly conducting historical research, and historians are involved in social analysis. The sessions covered an enormous range of topics, from women textile workers, women in fascist European states, women artists, seventeenth century French women intellectuals, women's work and leisure in the late nineteenth century, unionism and feminism, social reform, nonviolence, representations of women in ancient art, and so on.

Perhaps the best way to express the flavor of the meetings is to describe a few sessions. In a session on Margaret Mead, presentations were made by an historian (Virginia Yans) doing a biography of Mead, an anthropologist (Frances Rothstein) who critiqued Freeman's recent book critical of Mead's Samoa research, and Mary Catherine Bateson, the daughter of Margaret Mead and herself an anthropologist. Rothstein's excellent critique of Freeman emphasized the politics of unprofessionalism and the eternal quest to discredit women's scholarship. Bateson's insight into her mother's life and work illustrated the centrality of work in her life and the need to understand Mead and her anthropology in a holistic way.

A fascinating session on quilt making and quilt makers with a slide presentation demonstrated the significance of quilt making for Blacks as a celebration of life, a survival mechanism to express the Black experience, and as a basis of community among Black women and men and in some cases between Black women and White women.

In an exceptional evening session several women union organizers who were active in unions and in the Socialist and Communist parties in the 1930's gave resumes of their experiences being currently incorporated into an oval history project at New York University. The experience of hearing these women recall and comment upon their years of struggle was exhilarating and inspiring.

Jo Vellacott's reflections on Catherine Marshall demonstrated the importance for Marshall of her family's work for suffrage. Marshall's activity moved from suffrage to feminism of a more radical nature in her work on behalf of women in the trade and miners unions. Her endeavors led her increasingly to pacifist concerns, as she realized the relation between militarism and antifeminism. Many other papers, some of which focused on Emma Goldman, Charlotte Gilman, Beatrice Webb, reminded us of the importance of researching and knowing about women's lives in history to kindle the community of women and to continue more effectively the work which they began.



LETTER OF PROTEST

November 12th, 1984

Honourable Flora MacDonald
Minister for Employment and
Immigration
Parliament Hill
Ottawa, Ontario

Dear Minister,

I am writing to protest your lack of action or comment in the case of Manon.

In a recent news investigation into the Canadian Justice system, it came to the attention of the reporter - Pierre Leduc of CFCF 12 in Montreal - that a woman named Manon is in fear of her life due to the inadequate legal recourses available to her.

She had been brutally attacked three times by a man, Celestino Hernandez-Fernandez, who is presently serving a two-year prison term for the third attack. He is due to be released from jail on December 10th, 1984 after having served only 18 months of his sentence - at which time he had vowed to kill Manon.

There is no reason to doubt his intentions or determination given his past record, yet no agency appealed to has been able to offer any protection to Manon.

We now understand that the Department of Employment and Immigration has recommended that he be deported. However, the hearing procedure is a lengthy one. Nevertheless, it is within the Department's preview to have Hernandez-Fernandez picked-up when he leaves prison and detained at Parthenais jail, here in Montreal, pending these hearings and possible deportation. Yet the Department is unwilling to take such a step and will not say why. When contacted, you refused to comment.

I find this appalling and can only question your department's priorities, particularly regarding women, when no steps are

taken to protect a citizen's life. There is no doubt in my mind that this issue pertains directly to women's situation in this society and your silence on the matter merely adds to the prevailing view that women's lives are not important.

I strongly urge you to take action immediately to ensure Hernandez-Fernandez continued stay behind bars.

Yours sincerely,

cc. Mr. Ronald Blanchette
Directeur des opérations
immigration
Département Emploi et Immigration
Canada
5167 Jean Talon E.
Montréal, Québec
H1S 1K7

The Rt. Honourable John Turner
Leader of the Opposition
Liberal Party
Parliament Hill
Ottawa, Ontario

Mr. Pierre Leduc
CFCF 12
405 Ogilvie Avenue
Montréal, Québec
H3N 1M4

The Honourable Ed Broadbent
Leader
NDP Party of Canada
Parliament Hill
Ottawa, Ontario

The above letter of protest was written by some students at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute to support the much publicised case of Manon. It should be interesting to follow the developments of this case as they unfold. The next issue of the Bulletin will feature an article by Mr. Pierre Leduc, ^{the} journalist who revealed the case of Manon to the public.

FLASH BACK : GUELPH ET NEW BRUNSWICK, juin 1984

par: Lynn Lapostolle

Le Congrès des sociétés savantes (oui, oui, savantes) avait lieu cette année à l'université de Guelph. Du 27 mai au 13 juin, des centaines et des centaines de linguistes, de philosophes, de politiciens... et d'étudiant/e/s en ... autant de disciplines s'y sont retrouvé/es. Malheureusement, si l'adjectif est au féminin dans le nom de l'association, j'ai souvent eu l'impression de me retrouver en terrain mâle. Sauf, bien entendu, lorsque les communications qui nous intéressent sont présentées par l'Association des professeurs (sic) de français des universités et collèges canadiens ou par l'Association canadienne des études sur les femmes !!! Ces deux associations tenaient leur congrès en même temps, soit du 4 au 7 juin, puisque le programme de l'ACEF était présenté conjointement avec celui de l'APFUCC.

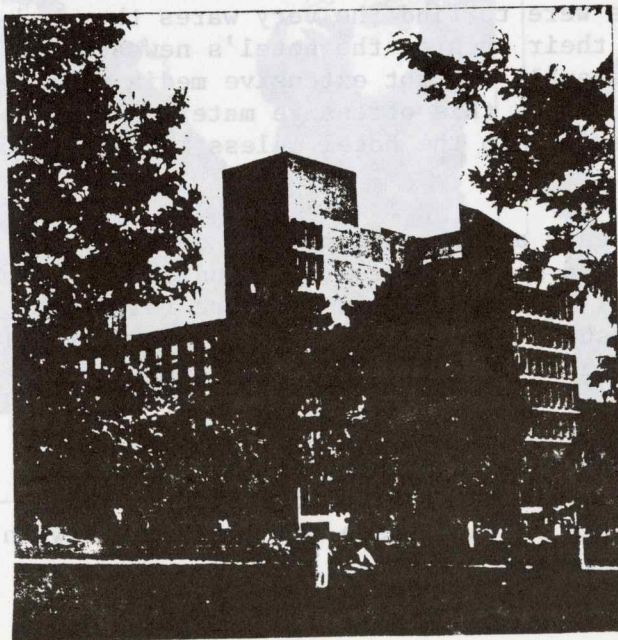
Chaque bloc de l'APFUCC comprenait une vingtaine d'ateliers différents, dont: Colette et son temps; Didactiques des langues I, II et III; Diderot I, II et III; Femmes et discours I, II, III et IV; en plus des communications libres. Pour ma part, j'ai assisté à une partie des communications sur les femmes et le discours. Si les textes présentés au cours des congrès de 1982 et 1983 ont donné lieu à la publication de Féminité, Subversion, Ecriture, il me semble fort peu probable que ceux de cette année soient eux aussi publiés.

Quant à l'ACEF, ce n'est pas encore une société savante autonome. Fondée en 1983, elle doit être marrainée pendant quelques années avant d'être considérée comme indépendante. Elle présentait cette année seulement quelques communications libres. Par ailleurs, elle avait eu la bonne idée d'organiser une session au cours de laquelle six étudiantes diplômées présentaient leur recherche en cours. Fort appréciée par les personnes qui y assistaient, cette heureuse initiative sera fort probablement répétée l'année prochaine. Avis donc à toutes celles que la chose pourrait intéresser!!! - Le Congrès aura lieu à Montréal. - Il y avait aussi au programme une plénière sur les journaux féministes et une autre sur la pédagogie et la planification.

Moins de trois semaines plus tard, nous (le nous étant cette fois un peu plus nombreux) repartions de gris matin en auto, en avion, puis en autobus. Dès l'inscription, surprise: le cahier des activités qu'on nous remet compte 268 plénières différentes. De quoi satisfaire un grand nombre d'intérêts dans un grand nombre de domaines. Et il n'y a pas que des plénières; il y a des projections de films, des concerts, des activités sportives, des expositions, etc.. Tout ça, mais là aussi un peu de déception dans le contenu.

Ce qui fait tant de bien et qui gynergise dans un congrès comme celui-là, c'est de se retrouver en présence d'un aussi grand nombre - apparemment 1500 - femmes, et de se rendre compte qu'il est important et nécessaire de continuer. Et ça, ça valait bien le déplacement...

P.S.: Je ne l'ai pas mentionné plus haut, mais c'est quand même très important: si j'ai pu me rendre à ces deux congrès c'est grâce à l'argent que l'Université m'a donné pour ce faire.



Learned Societies Conference Congrès des Sociétés Savantes 1984

May 27 — June 13

27 Mai — 13 Juin

University of
Guelph

NAC -- Mobilizing Women for Power

By: Kathy Silver

Months before the federal election was called, NAC was gearing up for it--letting politicians know, in no uncertain terms, that women were mobilizing for power.

The National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), Canadian women's most powerful lobbying group, is a nationwide umbrella association, composed of 280 women's groups and representing three million women.

I had the privilege of attending NAC's annual general meeting as a Simone de Beauvoir delegate. It was held in Ottawa's Chateau Laurier Hotel March 16 to 19, and I found it a hectic three and a half days of speakers, elections, panels, workshops, resolutions and protests. It culminated in our lobbying the federal caucuses on Parliament Hill.

The most contentious internal issue was the resolution that NAC's Head Office be moved from Toronto to Ottawa. That motion had been defeated on a tie vote the previous year, and this year was defeated conclusively (66 in favor and 75 opposed).

As pornography was one of the hottest issues, one can imagine how irate NAC members were to find the very wares they had been decrying peddled before their eyes on the hotel's newsstand. NAC mobilized its protest instantly and got extensive media coverage of its demand that the hotel remove this offensive material and its threat not to hold future meetings in the hotel unless it cleaned up its act.

As part of the heavy agenda, the meeting debated and voted on 27 resolutions that had been prepared and studied in advance, plus 13 emergency resolutions. The resolutions ran the full gamut of women's concerns--peace issues, native women's rights, affirmative action, job creation, health, abortion, divorce, pensions, pornography, child care and Charter rights.

Sunday's workshops devised strategies for presenting these concerns to members of parliament the following day. Tough, specific questions were prepared on each issue and questioners with expertise in that area were selected.

On Monday morning, the final day of the meeting, several hundred women walked up to Parliament Hill in a group to take part in the lobby. We met with the three party caucuses in turn, questioning each party separately as to its policies on women's issues. The obvious concern and knowledge of the issues shown by NAC's articulate spokespersons was impressive. (Less impressive were some of the M.P.'s, whose understanding of the issues was rather hazy, to put it kindly!) Nevertheless, NAC made its views very clear to the politicians and demanded to be taken seriously.

Perhaps it was this lobbying that made the political leaders realize how seriously women are committed to the issues, for it was a forerunner to the unprecedented TV debate on women's issues—another example of NAC mobilizing women for power.



ANNOUNCEMENT FROM THE WSSA

A perennial problem at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute is the fact that students and faculty rarely have a chance to meet together to discuss issues. A group of us have been meeting informally on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons in the lounge to hang out and unwind after the "Gender and Authority" class, and we have discovered a need to focus our discussions. As a result, the Women's Studies Student Association is proposing a series of colloquia on issues that we see as pressing in the Women's movement.

These could be organized to attract not only students and faculty at the Institute, but also the wider feminist community in Montreal. Some of the issues that we would like to see addressed are: the response of the women's movement to the rise of the right, the future of female separatism, strategies for the development of female culture, and possibly a discussion concerning the so called split between the academic and activist feminists.

These colloquia would not be difficult to organize (it would be a matter of finding someone who would be willing to facilitate the discussions and a group of women who would be willing to do some posters) and we are more than open to suggestions of other topics and help.

Anyone who is interested, please contact Catherine Kellogg at the Institute (879-8521).

CONFERENCE

22 - 23 - 24 FEBRUARY 1985

WOMEN and the

INVISIBLE ECONOMY

for further information contact:

Dr. Suzanne Peters Tel: (514) 879-8521 or (514) 392 4584

Les Femmes du Québec et du Manitoba
d'après Gabrielle ROY

par: Lucie Lequin

L'Institut Simone de Beauvoir annonce le
cours WMNS A398/4. (3 credits)

Ce cours portera sur la condition féminine dans l'oeuvre de Gabrielle Roy. Cette grande écrivaine rend compte d'une partie de l'histoire des femmes du Québec et du Manitoba. Elle donne la parole à de nombreuses femmes ordinaires de tous les âges et elle fait état de leur vécu.

Bien avant l'écriture féministe, elle aborde des thèmes maintenant familiers: les relations mère/fille, l'amour/piège, l'ambivalence de la maternité, la double misère (double exploitation des femmes, la relativité du temps.

Il ne s'agira pas de limiter l'oeuvre de Gabrielle Roy au fait féminin mais de le privilégier.

Lieu de découverte de la mémoire des femmes, mais aussi lieu de rencontre avec le présent.

Une liste de lectures sera présentée dès le premier cours; les personnes intéressées pourront se la procurer à l'avance en s'adressant au secrétariat de l'Institut.

Pour de plus amples renseignements appelez: 879-8521.



Pope Joan memory returns to haunt Catholic church

By NANCY KNICKERBOCKER

Whatever feelings Canadians may have about Pope John Paul's defence of women's traditional role in service to the church and his opposition to their ordination as priests, most would be astonished to learn that more than 1,000 years ago a woman held the same position as His Holiness.

It is one of the Vatican's best-kept secrets that the ninth-century pope known as John VIII of England was a woman.

Although attempts to discredit her existence have been many and vigorous, today she is known as Pope Joan.

Two Montreal artists are using the occasion of Pope John Paul's tour of Canada to "bring back the memory of this woman who has been systematically erased from history."

Kathleen McFall and Deborah d'Entremont, who jointly comprise Project Pope Joan, have designed T-shirts, posters and postcards with the image of the forgotten woman pope. They are for sale across Canada as an alternative to official papal souvenirs.

According to the People's Almanac and various historical sources, Joan was born in Britain in 818. In the lifelong disguise of a man, she travelled to Athens, where she studied philosophy. She later went to Rome to enter the priesthood. There she gained a reputation as a brilliant scholar and won a university chair.

Her rise through the Vatican hierarchy was rapid. Pope Leo IV appointed her a cardinal and, upon his death in 853, she was elected to the highest seat in Catholicism.

Pope Joan ruled the Roman Catholic Church

from 853 to 855, and likely would have ruled longer had her romantic desires not intruded.

She fell in love with her private chamberlain, a youth named Florus, and her true gender was exposed when she gave birth prematurely to their son during a papal procession.

The crowd, upon realizing that the baby was the result of Pope "John's" deception and not a miracle, became enraged. Joan was tied to the tail of her horse, dragged through the streets of Rome and stoned to death.

Some histories say her child also perished at the hands of the angry mob; others say he survived to become the Bishop of Ostia. Florus retired to a monastery.

For centuries the Vatican attempted to dismiss accounts of Pope Joan as legend, despite her acknowledgement by over 150 church historians of the Middle Ages.

"In a lot of the history books, Pope Leo's death was moved back two years, to 855, to cover her pontificate," McFall said.

"Immediately after Joan's death the church also initiated the practice of a sex exam for papal candidates, which continued for about 800 years. It was to determine that the candidate was a man — not a eunuch and, above all, not a woman," she added.

In the 17th century Pope Clement VIII systematically destroyed all records and statuary of Joan and issued an official declaration saying she was a mythical figure.

Greek author Emmanuel Royadis was excommunicated for his 1886 biography, *Papissa Joanna*, and the book was banned.